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For Consumers and Providers of In-Home Care Services

Winter Issue ~ February 2006

In this Issue



From the Director

Chair's Corner

Safety Training

RWRC Updates

Referral Services Updates

Tax Information

HCQA & Consumer News



Home Care Quality Authority
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From the Director

By Mindy Schaffner, Executive Director



There has been a lot of activity around the Home Care Quality Authority these past three months. The start-up of four new Referral and Workforce Resource Center (RWRC) service delivery areas requires completing a rather lengthy bidding and contracting process. On November 28th the HCQA board voted to enter into contract for RWRC services with Professional Registry of Nursing, Inc., Sunrise, Inc./Community Trades and Careers, and Southeast Washington Office of Aging and Long Term Care.

On January 12th and 13th, the HCQA conducted training for 23 people who are involved in the daily operations and management of RWRC services. The RWRC staff was provided information on marketing, recruiting and supporting the individual provider workforce, as well as providing services to consumer/employers and case managers. In addition, the RWRC's were given instruction on how to operate and utilize the Referral Registry database which matches consumer/employer needs and preferences to individual provider worker experiences, skills and availability. HCQA staff have made on-site visits to assist the new RWRCs in start-up operations.

The HCQA plans to begin operations of other RWRC's within the next four months. These RWRC's will provide services in King County and Northwest Washington.

If you would like to become an in-home worker, or a consumer/employer seeking an in-home worker, contact one of the RWRC sites at 1-800- 970-5456.

More information on page 3, New RWRC's Underway.

Chair's Corner

By Charles Reed, HCQA Chair

Those of us serving on the Board of the Home Care Quality Authority are very excited and pleased this month to know that we are a major step closer to our goal of assuring that those in need of in-home long-term care services have access to the high quality caregivers of service they need and want. During the month of January, the HCQA opened several new Referral and Work-force Resource Centers (RWRCs) around the State.

I have mentioned before in this Newsletter that we are fortunate in the State of Washington to have a long-term care system that provides consumers a choice as to the type of service they prefer to meet their long-term care needs. In many states around the country, those in need of long-term care services have very limited options.

One of the goals of the RWRC, is to assist the consumer/employer with viable, quality choices in their preferred long-term care service provider.

In most states the only real option for those in need of long-term care services is to leave their own home and move to some sort of residential setting to receive needed services. In Washington State many people in need of long-term care assistance can choose to live in their own home and have their service needs met by a caregiver coming into their home to provide the needed services.

Expansion of the RWRCs is one more important step in the achieving the HCQA's goal of independence, dignity and choice for all those in need of long-term care services.

"With the expansion of the RWRC's to more areas of the state, more and more long-term care consumers who prefer to receive needed services at home will be able to access caregivers in their area that are qualified, willing and able to provide assistance." - Charley Reed, HCQA Board Chair

Safety News

By Jane Wood
Training and Communication Program Manager

From Your Safety Committee

The Safety Committee that addresses individual provider safety issues met in Olympia on February 2, 2006. Representatives from Service Employees International Union Local 775, Department of Social and Health Services, Home Care Quality Authority and several individual providers met to discuss the results of safety training and to plan ways to improve the safety program.

The committee agreed to develop a resource guide that will be mailed to all individual providers in July, 2006. The resource guide will provide guidance on how to prepare for emergencies, where to get durable medical equipment, and how to find other safety equipment. The committee also discussed ways to share instruction tips and injury information to local trainers so they can improve the classroom experience for workers who attend safety training.

The safety committee meets again in May, 2006. The meetings are open to the public and individual providers are encouraged to attend. If you'd like to receive a meeting notice, contact Jane Wood at 360-725-2575 or by email at jwood@hcqa.wa.gov

HCQA is Committed to Improving the Quality of Long Term In-Home Care Services and Encouraging Stability in the Individual Provider Workforce

So. CENTRAL & S. EAST SERVICE AREAS

Aging and Long Term Care

**106 S. 6th Ave, Yakima 98902 - and -
311 Clearwater Ave, Kennewick 99336**

Lori Brown, Registry Administrator
(509) 965-0105

BrownLJ@dshs.wa.gov

Karen Sommers, Registry Coordinator
Jan Faller, Registry Coordinator
Yakima Office

Darlene Machin, Registry coordinator
Ellensburg Office

Corrie Blythe, Registry Coordinator
Zillah Office

Beth Johnson, Registry Coordinator
Luisa Nino, Registry Coordinator
Marlo Daily, Registry Coordinator
Kennewick Office

Karie Potter, Registry Coordinator
Walla Walla Office

Rita Lenhart, Registry Coordinator
Dayton Office

Jan Zorb, Registry Coordinator
Joanne Cassetto, Registry Coordinator
Pomeroy Office

Kim Cushman, Registry Coordinator
Clarkston Office

PIERCE SERVICE AREA

Professional Registry of Nursing, Inc.

**310 N. Meridian, Suite 210
Puyallup, WA 98371**

Judy Allen-Flynn, Registry Administrator
800-776-1101 ext.160
judyaf@prninc.net

Colleen Champaco, Sr. Program Specialist

Amy Huffman, Program Specialist

Anita Saunders, Program Specialist

Natasha Cepeda, Program Specialist

NORTHWEST SERVICE AREA

Sunrise Services, Inc.

Community Trades and Careers

**1101 S. 2nd. St
Mount Vernon, WA 98273**

Lisa Hanks, Program Coordinator
425-212-4204
lisah@sunrisecommunityliving.com

Linda Perry, Registry Coordinator

Barbara Browning, Registry Coordinator

New RWRC's Underway!

By Lisa Livingston, RWRC Program Manager

As you have learned by now our RWRC's have grown to add service in several more counties! Each area has unique issues that surround in-home services, which is why the RWRC staff are so vital to the Referral Registry process! I have enjoyed getting to know the RWRC administrators and their coordinators from each service area. I would like to take a moment to introduce the administrators and their service areas.

Lori Brown is the RWRC Administrator for **South East and South Central Service Areas**. Lori has been with ALTC since 1989 as a case manager, planner, than a regional manager for the Title XIX Case Management and Senior Information and Assistance programs. This vast region stretches from Kittitas County (Ellensburg and surrounding communities) through the Tri-City area, on over through Walla Walla and finally to the Dayton and Pomeroy areas. Lori and her staff have been working within the region through the South East Aging and Long Term Care (SE/ALTC) Office based in Yakima, WA which is a designated Area Agency on Aging covering this eight county area. Helen Bradley is the Executive Director of the SE/ALTC.

Judy Flynn is responsible for RWRC services for Pierce and Kitsap Counties, known as the **Pierce Service Area**. Judy has worked with PRN for six years providing nursing services through in-home oversight visits and providing training for Fundamentals of Care Giving. Judy recognizes the frustration of the consumer/employer when they cannot find a caregiver and likewise that Providers don't always know how to find additional consumers/employers. "I am excited to have the opportunity to help both groups connect with one another through the RWRC," states Judy. Jay Crosby is the President of PRN.

Lisa Hanks oversees the RWRC for the **Northwest Service Area**. Lisa has worked in the human services field for thirty years and specialized in training and employment (workforce development) for persons with disabilities, displaced workers, disadvantaged workers, and with older workers. Lisa states, "I believe in being creative and innovative, finding a need and getting the job done." This Service Area reaches from Whatcom County from the North through Skagit, Island and San Juan Counties. Lisa works with Sunrise Services/Community Trades and Careers (CTC) based in Everett Washington. Sue Closser is the President of Sunrise Services/CTC.

On the left you will find names and contact information for the new Referral and Workforce Resource Centers.

Welcome Aboard!

HCQA CONTACT INFORMATION

Mindy Schaffner, Executive Director & CMS Grant
Project Director—(360) 725-2635
mschaffner@hcqa.wa.gov

Sherri Wills-Green, Referral Registry Program Manager & RWRC Contract Manager
(360) 725-2520
swills-green@hcqa.wa.gov

Jane Wood,
Training & Communications Manager
(360) 725-2575
jwood@hcqa.wa.gov

Lisa Livingston, RWRC Program Manager
(360) 725-2615
llivingston@hcqa.gov

HCQA Newsletter Contact

I want to say “hello” and thank my fellow HCQA staff and board members for the warm welcome I have received over the first 90 (plus) days of employment! Thank you to all of the RWRC staff also for letting me ask thousands of questions. I surely have more for you!

My role at HCQA is to facilitate the roll-out of Referral and Workforce Resource Centers and I would like to personally welcome the new RWRC sites and staff. What an exciting time for all of us as we grow and learn together.

Your comments and submissions are always welcome for consideration in our quarterly HCQA newsletter and for our HCQA and RWRC website as well. We are updating the HCQA website so check it often! ~ Lisa Livingston

Referral Services Update

By Sherri Wills-Green, Referral Registry Program Manager

The Referral and Workforce Resource Centers (RWRC) are celebrating the first full year of operations in Spokane, Whitman, Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille and Snohomish counties. Along the way, each RWRC has created a positive local presence in each community, a pool of qualified workers ready for employment, and a local Advisory Council. Further more, each RWRC has become a resource for consumers and case managers to be used when looking for workers.

The RWRC's, including the Tumwater office covering Thurston, Lewis, and Mason counties, are working towards strengthening the working relationship with case managers who assist individuals with developmental disabilities. Through the use of the Referral Registry, family members, who take care of a relative, can locate a worker who has showed a willingness to work on a short term, approved basis. This allows the family provider to go to medical appointments, take a break or even a short vacation. Once a worker has been interviewed and selected from the referral list by the consumer/employer or consumer representative, the case manager must be informed in order to complete the authorization process.

Currently, the four RWRC's have 679 qualified available workers looking for employment. To date, 372 consumers of COPES or Medicaid Personal Care have used the registry to request a referral list with the names of qualified providers. During January 2006, more than 50% of the referrals resulted in finding and employing a worker.

**Access the
Referral Registry
at
www.hcqa.wa.gov**

*Case managers may also have access to the Referral Registry database
by contacting the RWRC serving your area.*

A Message to Individual Providers

About Federal income Tax Withholding



Article 14.3 of the CONTRACT negotiated between Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and the State of Washington gives individual providers the opportunity to have federal income tax withheld from their paychecks beginning July 1, 2006. Individual Providers will need to decide if they want federal income tax withheld from their paycheck.

If you are an individual provider and do not want to have federal income tax withheld from your paycheck, you do not need to do anything. Federal Income Tax will not be withheld unless you submit a W4 form. The decision on whether or not you want Federal Income Tax deducted from your paycheck is up to you and is **COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY!** Your decision will not have an effect on whether or not you owe federal income taxes. If you choose to have federal income tax deducted from each paycheck:

- Your paycheck will be decreased by the tax withheld;
- The amounts deducted for federal income tax will show on your W2 form as withheld and paid to the Internal Revenue Service on your behalf;
- If too much is withheld, you can file for a refund when you file your 1040 tax return;
- You can change your withholding amount by submitting a new W4 form;
- You can stop your federal income tax withholding at anytime by submitting a discontinuance form; and
- Forms will be made available through several offices and on-line. Future notices will provide that information.

If you have questions about this decision, you should contact your tax advisor, the IRS toll free line 1-800-829-1040 or SEIU @ 1-866-371-3200 for further information.

The State of Washington cannot give you advice on making this decision, so please do not contact your case manager or any other person who works for the State for advice. Your April paycheck will contain further information on the federal income tax withholding option. You do not have to do anything at this time!

Tips from the Tax Desk for IP's with Questions about W-2's

If you have questions about the W2's you just received you can call the Department of Social and Health services tax desk at 360.664.5830. However the preferable contact is via email at taxinfo@dshs.wa.gov

If you do call the Tax Desk here are a few suggestions:

- **Speak clearly when leaving a message and repeat your call back number twice.**
- **If your phone blocks unidentified calls, it will not allow us to return your call.**
- **If you only want your form reprinted and mailed we will do that without returning your call.**
- **This time of the year the phone line fills up fast!**



The Tax Desk is not available for tax advice.

HCQA Strategic Plan: We would like to hear from you!

The Home Care Quality Authority is in the process of updating its strategic plan for the next biennium. The agency is required to submit the plan to the Office of Financial Management by May 1, 2006. The board would like to hear your thoughts on how the HCQA can serve consumer/employers of in-home services and individual provider workers. To share your thoughts you may call 360-725-2635, speak with a board member directly or email your ideas to mschaffner@hcqa.wa.gov or info@hcqa.wa.gov

Consumer Supervisory Training Now Online

By Jane Wood, Training & Communications Program Manager

Consumer supervisory training just got better! In addition to the first classroom-based course, *How to Hire and Keep Good Staff*, local Referral and Workforce Resource Centers (RWRCs) just negotiated with SkillSoft, a national online training vendor, to provide unlimited online training for 25 consumers/supervisors per each RWRC site that serve the following counties: Spokane, Whitman, Ferry, Stevens, Pend Oreille, Snohomish, Lewis, Thurston and Mason.



Consumers/supervisors in those counties must be apply for access to the Referral Registry in order to receive the unlimited online training. Courses range from the certified Project Management series, to business management and beyond. Over 700 courses are now available and participants can take them from the leisure of their own home at their own time and pace. Consumers/supervisors can choose two classes or 700—as many as participants wish to complete in a year. Contact your local RWRC at 1-800-970-5456 for more details.

HCQA Represents Consumer/Employers during Upcoming Collective Bargaining

The Home Care Quality Authority will be participating in the upcoming union contract negotiations between the State of Washington and Service Employees International Union. The HCQA has a specific role in these negotiations and represents consumer/employers issues related to the long-term care in-home service system. Board members Brenda Carlstrom and Charley Reed, and staff member Mindy Schaffner are the HCQA contract negotiating representatives.

If you are a consumer/employer and would like to provide input into these negotiations, please contact one of the above representatives at info@hcqa.wa.gov or call 1-866-580-4272.





*Committed to Improving the Quality of Long Term In-Home Care Services
and Encouraging Stability in the Individual Provider Workforce*

***Referral Registry** - Matching the needs of publicly funded in-home consumers with pre-qualified individual providers using the latest in web-based technology.*

***Referral & Workforce Resource Centers** - Offering programs and services to support individual providers and their employers at local sites across the State.*

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